

REMARKS

Claims 1-19, 22-25 and 27-33 appear in this application for the Examiner's review and consideration.

In the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged that claims 21 and 26-33 were directed to allowable subject matter. In order to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Applicants have elected to amend the claims to accept the subject matter that the Examiner allowed. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 20 and 21, the latter of which the Examiner indicated was allowable. Similarly, claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 26. Finally, claim 29 has been rewritten in independent form. Thus, the application now contains 3 independent claims that the Examiner has indicated contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 20-21 and 26 have been cancelled because the subject matter therein was included into the independent claims. All the claim amendments herein are made without prejudice to Applicants' right to file one or more continuing applications directed to any subject matter not presently claimed, including for example, originally presented claim 27.

No new matter has been added by these amendments and additions.

Rejection Over Prior Art

Claims 1-2 and 22-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,630,998 and claims 3-20 and 24-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on several combinations of prior art references.

As set forth above, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 20 and 21. Claim 21 was identified as an objected to claim containing allowable subject matter. Thus, the inclusion of these elements into claim 1 should place claim 1 in condition for allowance. Similarly, claim 25 was amended to include the limitations set forth in original claim 26. Claim 26 was objected to by the Examiner and deemed to have allowable subject matter. Thus, claim 25 should also be in condition for allowance. Finally, claim 29 was rewritten in independent form. This claim too contained allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 25 and 29 are believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the reasons set forth above. Moreover, the remaining claims depend from the claims discussed above and add additional features. These claims are believed to be

patentable for the totality of the claimed inventions therein and by virtue of their dependence from the independent claims. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

Based on the remarks set forth above, Applicants believe that all of the rejections have been overcome and the claims of the subject application are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any further concerns or believe that a discussion with the Applicants' attorney would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the attorney at the number below.

No fee is believed to be due for this submission. However, should any required fees be due, please charge them to Acushnet Company Deposit Account No. 502309.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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